

Independent Music Artists in a Digital World

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

This research project covers the Internet, social media, and other forms of digital media that independent and small label music artists can use to promote themselves and their music. This paper explains aspects of the music industry, music streaming and how it works, the differences between being on a record label and being independent, artists who have been successful without the help of a record label, and marketing strategies that artists can employ to promote their music. This project is informative and can be of use to musicians, music students, business students and professionals and anyone else who is interested in marketing and how it used in the music industry.

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Process Analysis Statement

I started working on this thesis at the end of the fall 2016 semester. I came up with my topic (Independent Music Artists in a Digital World), found my advisor and started to research. The last few weeks of the fall semester, the holiday break, and the start of this semester were spent finding articles, books and other sources to start researching my topic. I had a little bit of background knowledge on my topic as a result of taking a couple of classes here at Ball State on the Music Business but wanted to get more in depth and actually research how different marketing strategies could be applied to the music business. I figured out which of the sources I compiled had the best information and read through all of them taking notes along the way before writing my actual thesis. I researched topics such as; exclusivity based marketing strategies, co-creational strategies, branding and brand consumer relationship, music streaming, the music business, and social media and how it can be used for marketing. I wanted my paper to take all of these topics into consideration as I think they are all important to understand especially for any artists or musicians that may be reading my paper.

After finishing my research and compiling my list of sources that I would be using for my thesis I started to synthesize the information and actually start writing. I wrote this paper a little bit at a time and worked on it steadily for the last two months of the semester. Overall the process for writing my thesis was very smooth. I stayed on top of my work and if I ever had any trouble I met with my advisor or one of my professors in the Music Media Production Department. At the same time I was working on this I was also completing a senior capstone project for the Music Media Production department, and producing a six song EP for a Ball State student jazz combo. My senior capstone and the EP I was recording

took precedent in the early part of the semester as those were projects where I was at the mercy of others in terms of scheduling. I had a timeline drawn up for each project and even if I didn't keep to them religiously it helped me to stay on top of all my work. The most important thing I learned from doing these projects at the same time was how much I could handle and what my limits were for specific days where I was working on two or all three of these projects on the same day, as well as, how many big projects I could handle simultaneously over an extended period.

Overall, I am happy that I picked this as my thesis topic as it taught me a lot through research and writing, about skills that will be of use in my field and can translate to other fields. It has helped me to learn to more effectively manage and budget my time and energy, and has given me experience working on multiple large projects at the same time. It has also gotten me to understand how I deal with stress from doing multiple projects at the same time and how to work through it so that I can effectively complete any projects that I have in the future. The hardest part of my experience working on this thesis was the amount of work these projects were for me, but that is also what has been the most rewarding part of my experience as the semester ends and I am successfully wrapping up all of my work.

In the past twenty years or so the music business has changed immensely. Record labels have gone from selling vinyl records and tapes, to selling CDs, to selling music on services like iTunes, and now are focused on streaming music. While changes in how music is made and distributed have made it easier to manufacture music, they have also made it harder for artists to capitalize on their music. The Internet along with other digital technology has made it possible for anyone to make music and distribute it, which has led to an over-saturated market. Anyone can record music, mix it, and distribute it from their bedroom, and since most people doing this are not signed to a record label they can decide how much they want to charge for their music (some even give their music away for free). This has led to a boom of independent artists who can make their own music, distribute it and have it heard around the world without ever even being in contact with a record label. However, the Internet, which makes it possible for smaller artists to have their music heard around the world, has also affected the revenue that can be gained from music. While this has not severely hurt some of music's biggest stars like Beyoncé, Adele, and Taylor Swift, it has hurt smaller artists, and independent artists who are having a harder time capitalizing on their work. Part of the reason that it has not hurt bigger artists is because they are part of major record labels that have an abundance of resources, which go towards promoting artists and their music. Independent artists and artists on smaller labels do not have the resources to compete with these major label artists, and therefore need to promote themselves and their music on their own or through smaller promotion companies. To be competitive and effective these artists need to be hands on and have an active role in the promotion of their music, and they can do that with the Internet and with Social Media. By understanding how the music business works, emulating promotional strategies that major record labels use,

and by using exclusivity based strategies, co-creational strategies, branding and Social Media, independent and small label artists can be effective and capitalize on their music.

Many people think of music and the music business as something that came about in the twentieth century, when music could be recorded and sold to consumers and played on the radio. However, a more comprehensive look at the history of music and music marketing shows that marketing of music and profiting off of it has been happening for centuries. Historical evidence exists that shows that bands with singers were playing in Egypt around 3000 B.C., and Gregorian Chants of the early 7th century involved notation, which allowed music to be performed over and over (James 121). For centuries musicians would profit off of performances, and also sold sheet music of their compositions. Around the turn of the twentieth century inventions like the phonograph, the nickelodeon, and eventually the gramophone made it possible for people to purchase music to listen to in their homes (James 122). In 1914 over 27 million records were printed and over the course of World War I that number nearly quadrupled and by 1919 over 100 million records were being printed a year (James 122). However popular forms of media like radio started to cut into record sales. As a result the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), which is still one of the largest performing rights organizations today, developed a royalty system so that composers, musicians and artists could still make money when their songs were on the radio as opposed to being purchased by consumers (James 122). In the 1940s and 50s the emergence of the jukebox, television, and the United States' increased global presence also contributed to the growth of the music industry. During World War II army radio stations were playing American music in parts of the world that would have never heard it otherwise leading to worldwide exposure for artists, record

labels, and the music business as a whole (James 123). In the 1950s the birth of Rock and Roll changed the way that records were promoted as this new style could make labels a bigger profit. There was more of an emphasis placed on sales in the 1950s and creating demand and promoting music became vital (123 James). From the 1950s until the late 1990s the music business continued to grow, through the British Invasion and "Beatlemania", through TV shows like the Ed Sullivan Show and Soul Train, and eventually a television channel devoted to the pairing of music with visual storytelling called MTV, which was launched in 1981. In the late 1990s however websites like Napster made it possible for people to download music without paying for it, which is illegal and has continued to be a problem for the music industry since then. Between 1999 and 2006 record sales went down 26% due to the ability to illegally download music, and the emphasis on digital downloads, which allowed people to purchase individual songs without purchasing the entire album (James 124). Various marketing strategies have been used to try and alleviate some of the profitability issues that go along with making music available to download digitally such as; making in-store appearances, doing interviews, music videos, television appearances and even canvassing and covering major cities in posters and stickers, which is a form of guerilla marketing utilized by the music business as well as small and independent artists (124 James).

Advertising has always played a major role in the music business, and now social media and the Internet has made it possible for artists to market their own music. The relationship between the music industry and advertising can be examined through the prism of the Media Culture Model of Communication, which divides social communication into the production, allocation, reception, and utilization of communication (Wang 23).

Both music and advertising can be considered forms of public communication, and their relationship is based on the music business's ability to penetrate the advertising industry and the advertising industry's ability to penetrate the culture (Wang 24). They work with each other as the music business uses advertising to sell music and the advertising industry uses music to sell products in commercials and ad campaigns.

Many people share the view that the music business today is floundering because music is cheaper than it has been in the past. However, where the music business has lost out on money from record sales, it has made up for in other areas to compensate. This doesn't mean that every artist makes as much money as they should, but the record companies and major artists are still making money through different avenues. In the past few years there have been different ways to market music than there had been previously. Today advertisements for new music can be seen on television, on YouTube, and heard on the radio. Major artists like Kendrick Lamar have had commercials that have been shown exclusively during major events on television, like during the NBA playoffs, and other artists have had commercials for their music during events like the Super Bowl, the Olympics, and awards shows. Some artists like Beyoncé have even used new tactics such as surprise albums, like her album *Lemonade*, in order to shock people and have had success by capturing the attention of the Internet, social media, and the overall zeitgeist. Some practices that were used in the past like in-store appearances are still used today to promote albums and tours. On April 20, 2017 Kendrick Lamar had an in-store appearance at a Best Buy in Compton, California for his 2017 Album *DAMN*. (Mariel). However, several marketing tactics available to artists like Beyoncé, and Kendrick are not realistic for

smaller artists who don't have the following and independent artists that don't have the resources of a record label to promote their music.

Major label artists have huge teams that consist of personal managers, business managers, agents, and attorneys who play a role in everything they do (Passman 11). They are also part of labels that have marketing and promotional professionals on staff. Many independent artists also have people who fill similar roles, however they are not from a record label and many of them are not solely focused on music. Major record labels give artists the opportunity to record music, and once it is finished the label sends their music to a distributor who then distributes their music both physically (like CDs in stores) and digitally (Passman 65). In the past major labels have held the keys to the promised land. However, with the changing landscape of the music business, and the advancements in digital media, the playing field has been leveled a little bit. It used to be that major labels were the best way to get your music into stores and on the radio, but with physical sales of music continuing to decline and with radio only playing a limited number of styles and artists, independent artists can make up for these shortcomings using new technology, like streaming, social media, and the Internet (Passman 71). A direct relationship with fans and consumers is becoming increasingly important as well, and many young artists are proving to be extremely good at connecting with fans using technology like Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, and some are even better than some major labels at this (Passman 71). Building up a fan base, engaging them and keeping them posted on what you are working on is important for any artist. Artists that don't have the resources of major label artists can use services like CASH Music, which is free, that can help them to stay in touch with their fans and even give them special offers like free music for joining their email list (Passman 14).

As was previously stated, physical music sales are down and artists are having to find new ways to capitalize on their music. For many consumers finding new music and listening to music involves combining multiple acquisition methods and platforms (Bert 603). Platforms include physical CDs, copying CDs, downloads (legal and illegal), person-to-person file sharing, and streaming both with video (YouTube) and without video (Bert 604). Music consumers can be broken down into 4 categories based on how they interact with music and what music acquisition methods they use. These categories are Traditionalists, Streamer/Downloaders, Light users, and All around users. According to a study done by Bert Weijters in his article, in which 685 people were surveyed, Traditionalists made up 33.7% of survey respondents, Streamer/Downloaders made up 20.7% of respondents, Light users made up 35.6%, and All around users made up 9.9% (607). Traditionalists are consumers that typically only use one acquisition model and are pretty much restricted to buying CDs (Bert 607). Streamer/Downloaders on average use four or more modes of acquisition, have the lowest average age of the four categories, the highest Internet use and involvement in music, and also have the highest percentage of students (Bert 608). Generationally these are mostly people that have grown up with music piracy and illegal downloads and are more likely to engage in these practices (Bert 608). However, with the influx of legal music streaming platforms have veered more in the direction of paying a subscription fee and have decreased their use of illegal downloading and person-to-person file sharing (Bert 608). It is important to note that this group has the highest involvement in music, and also the highest internet use of the four groups, meaning they can be targeted with streaming platforms but it is important for the platforms themselves to be high quality (Bert 609). For independent artists this may mean paying for

an aggregator to put their music on Spotify and Apple Music instead of just having it on websites like Band Camp. Light users do not have a very high level of involvement in music and can be targeted similarly to Streamer/Downloaders. However, since they are less involved, convenience and less work for them to do to acquire music is important (Bert 609). Lastly, All around users who make up the smallest piece of the pie can be targeted using free platforms, like YouTube, free versions of streaming services with advertisements, and services like Pandora (Bert 608).

Since the start of the 21st century physical sales of music have for the first time been overtaken by downloads and streaming, and many people have seen it as a major problem for the music business, while others have found new ways to effectively distribute music. This is where streaming services come into play. Music streaming has taken over and with so many options for services consumers can pick and choose which from service or services they want to get their music. One of the most important features of streaming services, such as Apple Music, Spotify, and Tidal, is the ability and option for each user to personalize their interface and their streaming library (Glantz 40). Consumers have the opportunity to “favorite” songs, create their own playlists and even have the service create playlists and recommend things for them based on their listening history. One example is Spotify, which uses algorithms to create playlists and offers a “Discover Weekly” playlist, which gives users music they may not have heard based on what they already listen to on Spotify. Streaming has not only taken the place of purchasing physical CDs, but it has also partially taken the place of radio. While radio allows people to be part of a collective and something bigger than themselves, streaming offers consumers a chance to listen to what they want to whenever they want, and not be affected by the general public’s taste in music

(Glantz 41). It is similar to how services like Netflix, Hulu, and On Demand services through cable providers have affected live television. Streaming services also offer consumers playlists for specific events or situations, like a dinner playlist, and gives consumers the opportunity to share what they are listening to with others via social media or through the platform itself (Glantz 42). Another important aspect of streaming platforms is that they help build an emotional connection with consumers and music lovers through a sense of ownership, personalization, and control (Glantz 45-46).

This is all fantastic for consumers but artists are not making the same money per song or per album off of streaming their music as they are selling physical copies, or even selling digital downloads. Musicians and artists get paid a small fraction of one cent per stream from streaming services. That money also gets split between the artist, the songwriter, the publisher, and the label, if the artist has one (Thomson). The publisher royalty gets split between whoever owns the copyrights to the song (Thomson). There are two types of copyrights for music, a sound recording copyright, which covers the actual recording of the song, and a music composition copyright, which belongs to the songwriter or composer. In most cases with major label artists the label owns the sound recording copyright, while independent artists usually own the sound recording copyright for their music and just have to pay a small percentage to an independent distributor (Thomson). In the case of major label artists, the label distributes their music and there is no need for an independent distribution company. Independent artists actually have the potential to receive a higher percentage of the royalty paid by the streaming service. However, the raw number of streams that artists on major labels get compared to smaller artists and independent artists offsets the higher percentage of the royalty. This is a byproduct of

major label artists receiving more exposure, marketing and promotion. Comparing the two streaming giants, Spotify and Apple Music, they both pay similar rates to artists. An artist will make on average \$0.0011 from Spotify per stream, and \$0.0013 from Apple Music although Spotify has more paying subscribers and around five times more total users than Apple Music (Money Too Tight). While the value of an artist's music is higher on Apple's service it is entirely possible to make more money with your music on Spotify. However, most artists have their music available on a number of streaming services.

Most artists that one might hear on the radio or see on TV are artists who have a major label behind them, however with the use of the Internet and Social Media more independent artists are finding themselves with platforms that were once reserved for major label artists. Macklemore and Chance The Rapper are two examples of independent artists who have reached similar heights as their colleagues on major record labels. Macklemore and Chance have both won Grammys, and performed live at the Grammys and other award shows. Chance The Rapper was the first artist ever to win a Grammy with a streaming only album (no physical copies or digital downloads), and was the first unsigned artist to perform on Saturday Night Live at the end of 2016. He also was chosen to perform a song during the 2016 ESPY's as part of their tribute to the late Muhammad Ali. Chance is adamantly against signing to a major label although many have reached out to try and sign him. Often times in interviews he will point to the fact that he wants to have full control over his music, which is not something that happens when people sign to record labels. Most record deals will allow the record company to have total control over an artist's masters and sound recording copyrights, and some even give labels control over an artists publishing rights (Thomson). For artists like Chance The Rapper it is to his advantage at

this point to keep control of his music, which also allows him to keep more of the money from revenue streams, such as streaming royalties. Signing with a label also gives up control of using your music for other mediums like, TV, movies, and commercials (Passman 71). This is called a “360 Deal” which allows the record label to participate in an artists’ various income sources (Wang 38). Ultimately independent artists have more control over their career and the direction they want to go.

Both artists have done an exceptional job of leveling the playing field with their colleagues on major labels, by connecting with their fans in person and on social media. Macklemore has had songs like, “Thrift Shop” that have become huge in part due to clever videos that dominate the Internet and YouTube. Chance The Rapper has had similar success with clever music videos, like his video for “Sunday Candy” his breakout hit, which was unique in that it was all filmed in one continuous shot. They both also have large presences on Social Media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram, and do a good job of keeping their followers up to date on what they are working on, where they are, and what they are passionate about.

Social Media is a large part of any artist’s career today, but for independent artists that do not have the resources of a major label, using social media to promote their music and build a personal brand is a must. Huge artists like Beyoncé, Kanye West, and Jay Z may tweet or post on social media once or twice a week and sometimes only once or twice a month, but for artists like Chance and Macklemore, keeping their followers updated, involved, and using social media to maintain their brand is practically a day-to-day job.

Social media has become one of the strongest and most important marketing tools since its inception, and not just for music and entertainment. Many companies follow

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) to follow and communicate with their target markets (W. Glynn 357). IMCs coordinate elements like advertising, personal selling, public relations, publicity, direct marketing and sales in order to create a consumer focused brand and message (W. Glynn 357). This IMC for any company should reflect the values that a company holds, and social media should work the same way. Social media is important in any business, but is one of the most powerful marketing tools for musicians and artists. It used to be that a satisfied or dissatisfied customer had the power to tell around ten people about their experience and now with social media those same customers have the power to tell millions of people (W. Glynn 359). Before social media it would be nearly impossible for an independent artist to have their music heard by millions of people, but now if a couple people hear your music and share it, and their friends share it, it can be heard by millions of people. Social media basically works like word-of-mouth advertising but on steroids. Another important aspect of social media is that it gives companies, brands, and in this case artists, the opportunity to communicate with consumers and fans in ways that were previously not possible. Social media is so effective in marketing because it combines IMC elements with a supercharged word-of-mouth advertising strategy (W. Glynn 359). There are downsides to social media like consumers having more power than they have ever had, and the fact that companies, brands, and artists no longer have the ability to control information pertaining to their brand and their public image (W. Glynn 359).

Even with the loss of control there is still a benefit for artists using social media to market themselves. Social media is the number one source of media for people in the workplace and the number two source of media for people at home (W. Glynn 360). Around the world live TV ratings are down, less people are listening to the radio, and less people

are paying for subscriptions to magazines and newspapers because they can watch, listen to, and read content using newer forms of digital media. Not only do consumers have these newer forms of media that will give them immediate access to content and information, but it also gives them opportunities to network with people that have the same interests as them (W. Glynn 361). It is important for artists to take advantage of this technology and use it to market their music. Not only are consumers more engaged when they have the opportunity to communicate with artists, but they are also more likely to purchase products and be involved in an artist's music the more they know about them (W. Glynn 363). Artists can use tactics on social media like taking polls (a feature that is built in to twitter), hosting contests, sharing stories and having giveaways to interact with their fans, and can even use social media to advertise real world events that matter to them. Days before the 2016 Presidential Election Chance The Rapper used social media to advertise an event he hosted in Chicago in which he had local artists perform in an attempt to get people registered to vote and to motivate them to actually go to the polls and vote. Everything an artist posts or shares on social media can be of use when marketing their music and themselves because if nothing else it gives consumers the sense that they are connected to artists and are a part of their network. Even posting about things that are unpopular or seem crazy to most people can garner publicity for artists and lead to more people checking out their profile, their website, and their music (W. Glynn 363). There are artists like Kanye West whose social media feed and public appearances are almost expected to be outrageous, but they lead to increased awareness of him and his music and lead to publicity for him, which helps him sell records, merchandise, and concert tickets. Independent artists should absolutely be using social media to market their music, and connect with

fans. One of the most important aspects of social media that artists need to realize that technology like Twitter, Instagram, etc. has made it so that marketing and promotion is no longer a one-way street, and it takes work to maintain their careers and their brands using social media.

There are a number of marketing strategies that independent artists can use to try and level the playing field with their colleagues on record labels. Many can be done using social media and are very simple, but are not always used by major labels that can pay whatever amount for marketing and promotion. One example is co-creational marketing, which can be defined as partnering with customers, colleagues, and partners to create new products, problem solve, and improve consumer experience (Crandell). Social media makes this strategy easy to pull off for just about any artist that has a following and has built up a community of fans and followers on social media. This is something that many companies do using surveys, focus groups, or usability testing, but can be done easily by reaching out to followers on social media and even an artists' real life network. Many professional sports franchises have used co-creational marketing when designing new logos, uniforms, and mascots and some have even had design contests where fans could submit designs and the best ones were voted on to find the design most favorable to the fans. Not only did this strategy help the franchises that used it see what might and might not work in the market at the time, but it also involved fans in their creative process. Artists could have contests to see which of their fans and followers can create the best cover of one of their songs or use strategies that major labels have used and have a remix contest where fans take their song and remix it however they want, which bands like Radiohead have done in the past (Brian 1155). An artist could use a co-creational strategy similar to what many sports franchises

use by having a contest to design artwork for an album or other release, or even ask them what they should wear for a music video or public appearance. Not only would this involve the fans, and get their opinions on what designs they might like, but it also gives a small or independent artist who doesn't have the resources of a major label an opportunity to get free album artwork and feedback from their fans. One example is Chance The Rapper, who has taken to Twitter in the past to ask fans what should be the next single off of his album, and what songs he should perform during his television appearances.

Another powerful tool an artist can use to market and promote their music is exclusivity. There is an oversupply of music so the way that it is produced, promoted, distributed and acquired is extremely important and can make the difference between an artist's music being heard by no one, by one city or region, or by the whole world (Brian 1144). Placing importance on these aspects of the creative process can help an artist stand out from their peers. The market for music features a balance between producers/artists and an intense and increasing demand for music by consumers and fans (Brian 1146). The use of exclusivity in the marketing and promotion of an artist's music can help to create demand for their music. While music is often times considered a form of media it should be noted that it is also a cultural product, which consumers can use to communicate their own characteristics such as class, social status, and individuality (Brian 1148). This also allows gives consumers an opportunity to network with others who listen to the same music and have similar characteristics to them. Music like other entertainment industries has its value determined by aesthetics, branding, and marketing and not labor or the work that a person puts into creating a product (Brian 1148). Exclusivity is important in any industry in how it is marketed but can be extremely effective for artists and musicians. Using co-creational

strategies can also add exclusivity to your music, and make it more unique and valuable to an artist's fans. Using the Internet and social media to create exclusivity could include free previews of music or videos for followers, exclusive releases, behind the scenes content, and free downloads for fans, which makes them feel special and makes their experience and their connection to an artist feel unique (Brian 1155).

Another important aspect of exclusivity is the idea of place and where you come from. This is something that can be seen with many rappers and hip-hop artists, who shout out where they are from and their communities in their songs, in videos, performances, and even display it on merchandise they sell. Chance The Rapper says in multiple songs that he grew up on 79th Street on the South Side of Chicago, and Jay Z refers to New York in many songs and even refers to the specific housing projects where he grew up in his song "Where I'm From". Other artists also take part in this whether they are from a giant city like New York, Atlanta, Chicago or LA or from a smaller city like New Orleans, Oakland or Portland. This is useful for artists of other genres as well that don't feature shout outs to a specific place in a song. However, songs in other genres may feature an artist or a band talking about specific places on social media and using the city where they are from in their branding. A small band named Twin Peaks from Chicago are constantly posting about Chicago on their social media, telling their fans about other artists, and even incorporating images like the Chicago flag or the logo of the Chicago Bulls into some of their merchandise. Artists can also make use of events and organizations in their cities. One example is Chance who hosts an open mic event periodically at the Harold Washington library in downtown Chicago for high school students to showcase their writing and performing abilities. He has even involved celebrities like Comedian Dave Chappelle and Chicago Bulls player Jimmy

Butler who have attended these events. Making music exclusive and unique makes people want to buy it and be a part of an artist's community of fans. While exclusivity and co-creational strategies are not guaranteed to make an artist rich, if used effectively strategies like these can be the difference between having a career as an artist and having music be a hobby or a part time job.

Also of importance to musicians and artists is branding and having a quality relationship between their brand and their followers. Examples of branding can be seen in music festivals, which Mossberg and Getz argued in their 2006 study could be managed like large brands (Simon 69). Festivals can also benefit from creating a sense of place, and like many artists today use social media as a vehicle for word-of-mouth advertising (Simon 69). Not only does social media allow festivals and artists to gain unmediated insights from consumers but using social media and the reach it has can lead to a higher growth rate for a fanbase. When people hear about a product, service, or even they become involved and become a customer at a 15% higher rate (Simon 69). Artists using social media to brand themselves are not only gaining fans at a higher rate but are also building emotional relationships between their brand and their fans. Since the market is so saturated the quality of music is not enough to be successful anymore, and a good quality relationship between a brand and its fans and supporters is what can lead to growth of a fan base and to of an artist's career. People listen to music because they enjoy it but also because they believe it represents who they are and their individuality, and they tend to project their own personalities onto brands when describing them and telling others about them (Simon 71). The quality of a relationship between a brand and its supporters will be greater the more the brand engages its followers on social media. Engaging fans on social media will

lead to the brand changing from a passive object to an active partner, which will in turn lead to a higher emotional attachment and more spending and sharing on the part of the fans (Simon 71-72). Branding using social media has a direct effect on emotional attachment, which affects the quality of the brand-consumer relationship (Simon 74). All of these marketing strategies can go a long way towards a successful career. But as important as it is to engage fans on social media, it is equally important to understand how fans and other consumers think and interact with an artist's actual product.

Consumers can be broken down into five consumer states: Unaware consumers, consumers who are aware but haven't decided to pursue a product further, immune consumers who have decided to ignore a product, forgotten consumers who have fallen by the wayside, and cognitive consumers who are active consumers who relay and share information about a product or service within their network (Tobey 35). It is up to an independent artist and their team to understand these five states, and come up with the best strategy to keep cognitive consumers interested and involved, and also turn consumers from the other four states into cognitive consumers. Once again understanding this and pairing the knowledge of who consumers are with co-creational, exclusivity, branding and other marketing strategies can help independent artists level the playing field with major label artists and find success in the music business while also controlling their music and their career trajectory. Similar to sports, where analytics, advanced stats, and branding are becoming increasingly important, musicians who do not have the resources of major labels have to be knowledgeable about their fans, the market, and other consumers in order to be successful in the music business.

Aside from marketing strategies it is important for independent artists to understand that selling records and people streaming their music is not the only way for them to make money and be successful. Obviously there are revenue streams like touring revenue, and revenue made on merchandise, which an artist has if they market themselves effectively, but there are others which many people don't think about. Artists can have their music played in commercials whether they are for large companies or small local businesses, and while it may not seem like much for an artist who has their heart set on just playing music, artists having their music be part of an advertisement can lead to more commercial success (Wang 41). If an artist or a small independent label focused more on music as secondary content and focused on using their music in commercials, licensing their music for TV, film, and video games and effectively promoted it through social media they once again can help to level the playing field with major labels and their artists (Wang 42). Understanding that music can be both primary and secondary content can help small and independent artists to elevate their status, grow their fan base, and add additional revenue streams.

The music business is not the same as it once was. The processes for making music, distributing it, and marketing it have all changed and one of the biggest reasons why is the Internet and Social Media. This technology almost destroyed the music business completely in the late 1990s with programs like Napster that allowed people to pirate and illegally download music. However, technology is also the reason for the abundance of music today and has given anyone that has access to it the ability to listen to music from all over the world, any style or genre, whenever they want. It is hard for many artists to support themselves especially if they do not have a record label backing them. Although small

artists and independent artists may not have the funds to compete with major label artists, they can make up for that and effectively level the playing field with technology afforded to them by the Internet and by social media. Understanding the music business, streaming, royalties, copyright, different marketing strategies, and branding can help small and independent artists to do this. Copying marketing strategies that major labels use and even being innovative and using technology to market music in new ways will end up being the difference for many artists going forward as the music business and the world continue to be affected and changed by technology and the advancements that will continue to be made.

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